

Exodus 28:1-30 - Thursday, April 9th, 2009

- We're in a most fascinating study of the tabernacle as we now continue in chapter 28. Tonight we'll learn about the High Priest.
- Again, at the risk of being redundant, everything about the Tabernacle has everything to do with Jesus Christ, who is our High Priest.

Hebrews 3:1-2 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. NKJV

- Before we start in verse one, I want to give you a brief overview with some visuals to get a better understanding about the High Priest.

28:1 "Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

- Here, God tells Moses to take his older brother Aaron, and Aaron's four sons so that they can minister to Him in the Tabernacle.
- This is most interesting and can often be missed, especially by those of us who serve in the ministry in one capacity or another.
- First and foremost, they are ministering to the Lord. Sometimes we tend to see the ministry as mainly serving the needs of the people.

- Also, it's important to remember that Moses and Aaron were Levites, and as such they were the only tribe to serve as the priests.
- You had to be born as a Levite to be in the priesthood. So too do we have to be born again to be in the priesthood of believers.

1 Peter 2:4-5 4 As you come to him, the living Stone-rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him- 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. NIV

2 And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.

- The Lord instructs Moses to make these garments in such a way that they are beautiful, and glorious so as to reflect God's glory.
- This is interesting because the garments worn by orthodox priests in mainline denominations is anything but beautiful. They're dark!

"Is then the dismal black, now worn by almost all kinds of priests and ministers, for glory and for beauty? Is it emblematic of any thing that is good, glorious, or excellent? How unbecoming the glad tidings announced by Christian ministers is a colour emblematic of nothing but mourning and woe, sin, desolation, and death!"

Adam Clarke

3 So you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest.

- The Lord now instructs Moses to speak to the gifted artists who He has filled with the spirit of wisdom in order to make these garments.
- In other words, the Lord has gifted these artists with a unique talent for this specific purpose, and He has filled them with the Holy Spirit.

4 And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.

- Now we get the specifics of what kind of garments are to be made, and again, we have specific details given to us in their description.
- We start with the breastplate and ephod, then go to the robe, tunic, turban, and sash which are all to be holy, and sanctified to the Lord.
- Also, notice that this is now the third time that God says this is so that the priests can minister to Him. This is our first ministry, to Him!

5 "They shall take the gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and the fine linen, 6 and they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, artistically worked.

- These are the same four colors of blue, purple, scarlet, and white fine linen that we have on the curtains. This pictures Christ's body.

7 It shall have two shoulder straps joined at its two edges, and so it shall be joined together. 8 And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen.

- It was to be strapped over the shoulder and joined together, then intricately woven with the gold, and the four same colors.
- One has suggested that the breastplate and ephod were over the shoulders because the priests would bear the burdens of the people.
- In addition to this it would be over the heart, so the priests would have a heart for the people as well in their service to the Lord.

9 "Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: 10 six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth. 11 With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall set them in settings of gold. 12 And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial. 13 You shall also make settings of gold, 14 and you shall make two chains of pure gold like braided cords, and fasten the braided chains to the settings.

- These two stones on both shoulders had, in order of their birth, the names of the 12 sons of Israel engraved on them.
- I believe that God wanted the names engraved on the precious stones because the children of Israel were precious in His sight.

15 "You shall make the breastplate of judgment. artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it.16 It shall be doubled into a square: a span shall be its length, and a span shall be its width.17 And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: The first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; this shall be the first row;18 the second row shall be a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond;19 the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst;20 and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings.21 And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.

- There were to be a total of 12 stones on the breastplate, and we're told that they were to have the 12 tribes of Israel engraved on them.
- Also, the 12 stones were to be in four rows of three, and we have a list telling us what kind of precious stones these were.
- There is an interesting similarity with these 12 stones found in the book of Revelation where there's a description of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:19-21 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the Eighth beryl, the Ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. NKJV

- "12" is a significant number in the scriptures, you have the 12 Tribes of Israel, the 12 Disciples, 12 thrones, and here 12 stones.

"This number symbolizes God's perfect, divine accomplishment actively manifested. It shows a completeness of a growth or administration. Twelve marks governmental perfection and is used as the signature of Israel. This number is used 187 times in the bible. It is used 22 times in the Book of Revelation. Twelve is the number for government by divine appointment. Jesus said to His disciples, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 19:28)
Ed. F. Vallowe, "Biblical Mathematics" p. 98

22 "You shall make chains for the breastplate at the end, like braided cords of pure gold.23 And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate.24 Then you shall put the two braided chains of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate; 25 and the other two ends of the two braided chains you shall fasten to the two settings, and put them on the shoulder straps of the ephod in the front. 26 "You shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the ephod.27 And two other rings of gold you shall make, and put them on the two shoulder straps, underneath the ephod toward its front, right at the seam above the intricately woven band of the ephod.28 They shall bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the ephod, using a blue cord, so that it is above the intricately woven band of the ephod, and so that the breastplate does not come loose from the ephod. 29 "So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually.

- Notice that this breastplate is called the "breastplate of judgment." This is how the High Priest would judge, discern, and even decide.

30 And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

- Now we're introduced to why, for the third time, it's called the breastplate of judgment, because in it will be the Urim and Thummim.
- The Urim and Thummim were used by the High Priest to judge, and discern what the will of the Lord was when making a decision.
- We see examples of the Urim and Thummim being used throughout the scriptures when one was to "obtain a decision," from the Lord.

Numbers 27:21 He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the LORD. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in." NIV

- What exactly was the Urim and Thummim? We don't know for sure however some believe they were two stones one black, one white.
- The thought is that the High Priest, when seeking the will of the Lord, would reach into the breastplate and pull out one of these stones.
- If he pulled out a black one, it was no, and if it was the white one, it was a yes. Another thought is that the stones would glow.

FB Meyer suggests the Urim and Thummim was a brilliant diamond, which would flash with a "yes" or dim with a "no" answer from God.

- Before we move on to verse 31, I want to talk a little bit about how it is that we can discern and know what the will of the Lord is for us.
- As believers, we want to know and be in God's will but sometimes it's not always so clear when discerning what God wants us to do.
- The Urim and Thummim can give us some much needed insight as it relates to seeking the Lord and discerning the will of the Lord.

SITUATION	APPLICATION
The breastplate was situated on the heart as a continual memorial before the Lord.	God will speak to us by placing His will as a desire on our heart, continually. Then he will give us that desire.
Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. NIV	
The Urim (which means light or truth) was situated "in" the breastplate.	God will speak through His Word which is the Word of Truth lighting up the path that I am to take.
Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. NIV	
The stones were situated with all of the names of the 12 tribes on them.	God will speak through His church, or many tribes, or advisers, living stones, (1 Peter 2:5) if you prefer, when revealing His will.
Proverbs 11:14 For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure. NIV	
The Thummim, (which means perfect integrity) was also situated in the breastplate as a guide with the Urim.	God will speak through the integrity of our hearts which will guide us if we have integrity to do it.
Proverbs 11:3 The integrity/tummah of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity. NIV	
- Paul, to the church in Rome, describes this integrity of the heart and renewing of the mind, as a prerequisite to knowing God's will.	
Romans 12:1-2 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will. NIV	